

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS PRAGUE 1335

COMMERCE FOR BEWT/EEAD (ELLIS) AND BEWT/TPD (THOMPSON)

VIENNA FOR USEWTC

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, CZ

SUBJ: MINING EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION

REF: A. STATE 122012

B. VIENNA 3929

C. PRAGUE 934

1. EMBOFF HAD BRIEF DISCUSSION WITH DR. NOVOTNY, FEDERAL MINISTRY OF METALLURGY AND HEAVY ENGINEERING, AT ITALIAN NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION JUNE 2 ABOUT MINING EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION AND QUESTIONS RAISED REFTELS A AND B. TO BEGIN WITH, NOVOTNY ASSURED EMBOFF THAT HIS REMARKS IN VIENNA RELATED ONLY TO TECHNICAL LEVEL OF CERTAIN LINES OF EQUIPMENT DESCRIBED BY SOME -- NOT ALL -- TRADE MISSION MEMBERS AND NOT TO MANNER IN WHICH PRESENTATIONS WERE MADE. NOVOTNY UNDERSTOOD DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TRADE MISSION AND TECHNICAL SALES SEMINAR APPROACH AND RECOGNIZED THAT SUBJECT EVENT WAS IN FORMER CATEGORY. THUS, HIS CRITICAL SUGGESTIONS RELATED MORE TO EQUIPMENT SUBSTANCE THAN TO FORM, I.E., HE FELT SOME FIRMS WERE PUSHING EQUIPMENT -- SUCH AS SMALL-BORE DRILLING MACHINES -- WHICH DID NOT REPRESENT ANYTHING VERY NEW IN MINING TECHNOLOGY. ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT AND UNCLASSIFIED

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TECHNOLOGY WAS OF SUPERIOR QUALITY, IN HIS OPINION

AND THAT OF MINING ENGINEERS PRESENT AT MEETINGS, BUT CERTAIN LINES OFFERED CZECHOSLOVAK INDUSTRY LITTLE OR NOTHING IN WAY OF BREAK-THROUGHS IN TECHNOLOGY OR EXTRACTION TECHNIQUES. FINE DISTINCTION SHOULD BE DRAWN HERE BETWEEN HIGH QUALITY EQUIPMENT AND NEW TECHNOLOGY, AND CZECHS ARE IF ANYTHING MORE INTERESTED IN LATTER THAN IN FORMER. IT IS IN THIS WAY THAT NOVOTNY'S REMARKS TO USEWTC DIRECTOR IN VIENNA SHOULD BE TAKEN.

2. NOVOTNY SAID THA HE WOULD PROVIDE EMBOFF SOON WITH SPECIFIC LIST OF EQUIPMENT WHICH FAILED TO TURN CZECHS ON FOR OUR FUTURE GUIDANCE. HE HASTENED TO ADD THAT HIS COMMENTS WERE NOT MEANT TO IMPLY DISSATISFACTION WITH THE MISSION AS A WHOLE OR EVEN THAT MOST OF THE EQUIPMENT REPRESENTED DID NOT EXCITE REAL INTEREST HERE. ON CONTRARY, WITH THESE EXCEPTIONS, HE FELT MISSION HAD BEEN HIGHLY USEFUL IN EXPOSING CZECHOSLOVAK MINING PEOPLE TO MANY NEW IDEAS IN EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES. HE DID SAY THAT CLOSER COORDINATION WITH HIS MINISTRY WOULD HAVE RESULTED IN DETAILED LIST OF THOSE AREAS IN WHICH CZECHOSLOVAK MINING INDUSTRY HAD GREATEST INTEREST FOR USE IN RECRUITMENT PHASE OF TRADE MISSION PLANNING.

3. AS COMMERCE AWARE, DR. NOVOTNY HAS BEEN EXTREMELY HELPFUL TO EMBASSY IN ARRANGING TRADE MISSION IN PAST AND THEREFORE WE BELIEVE HE IS TRYING SINCERELY TO BE CONSTRUCTIVE IN HIS ASSESSMENT OF MINING EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION. EMBASSY, IN FACT, APPROACHED HIS MINISTRY TWICE FOR ASSISTANCE IN PLANNING THIS TRADE MISSION (SEE, FOR EXAMPLE, PRAGUE 2991 OF 12/4/74), BUT UNFORTUNATELY NOVOTNY WAS OUT OF PRAGUE FOR EXTENDED PERIODS ON BOTH OCCASIONS AND WE WERE SHUNTED TO MINISTRY OF FUELS AND ENERGY WHICH CONTROLS MOST OF ACTIVE MINES IN CSSR. THUS, WE RELIED HEAVILY ON LATTER MINISTRY FOR ADVICE AND GUIDANCE ON MINING INDUSTRY NEEDS.

4. WE WILL OBTAIN LIST OF SPECIFIC EQUIPMENT TO
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WHICH NOVOTNY REFERRED AND SUBMIT TO BEWT/EEAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. IN MEANTIME, EMBASSY GOES WITH ITS EARLIER ASSESSMENT THAT MINING EQUIPMENT TRADE MISSION WAS A SUCCESSFUL UNDERTAKING, TIMELY AND WELL-CONCEIVED. WE MIGHT ADD ONE FURTHER COMMENT AND THAT IS THAT INsofar AS ADVANCE WORK AND LOGISTICAL PLANNING AT WASHINGTON END IS CONCERNED, THIS MISSION WAS AMONG BEST WE HAVE EVER EXPERIENCED. THUS, FAR

FROM BEING PERTURBED, WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY NOVOTNY'S
REMARKS TO BELIEVE THAT MISSION EVOKED REAL INTEREST
IN U.S. MINING EQUIPMENT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA, DESPITE
MINOR DISAPPOINTMENTS. PERRY

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